During the discussions with the Sri Lankan Foreign Minister, there was a wide-ranging discussion on all issues of mutual interest. While expressing satisfaction at the existing state of bilateral cooperation, it was agreed that there were possibilities of further enhancing ties. It was agreed that Sri Lanka would host the third session of Indo-Sri Lanka Joint Commission later this year. Prior to the Joint Commission, it is proposed to convene meetings of the sub-Commissions on Science & Technology and Social, Cultural and Educational matters in Colombo. The Joint Commission would review the progress made in various spheres of bilateral cooperation and would also identify new areas of cooperation. Discussions were also held on improving ties in-the economic field. The question of fisheries and problems faced by fishermen of the two countries was also discussed and the two sides agreed to hold consultations to resolve these problems expeditiously. Both India and Sri Lanka emphasised the high priority given to maintenance of close and cordial bilateral relations and reiterated their commitment to further enhance bilateral cooperation in all fields.

Villages without Post Offices

1096. SHRI IQBAL SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the district-wise number of villages in the State of Punjab without post office by the 1995-96 and as on date;

(b) the district-wise number of villages in the State having post office, category-wise; and

(c) the district-wise and category-wise number of post offices proposed to be opened during the year 1996-97?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) The district-wise number of villages in the State of Punjab without Post Offices by the end of 1995-96 and as on date in given in Statement-I *(See* below).

(b) The district-wise number of villages in the State having post offices, category-wise is given in Statement-II *(See* below).

(c) It is proposed to open 2 Extra Departmental Branch Post Offices and 4 Departmental Sub Post Offices under Annual Plan, 1996-97 in Punjab. The district-wise target are not allocated as the Post Offices are opened on norm based justification and merits of each case.

Statement I

District-wise number of villages without Post Offices by the end of 1995-96 & to date

S. No.	Name of District	Number of villages without Post Offices
1.	Ludhiana	513
2.	Fatehgarh Sahib	103
3.	Patiala	1209
4.	Ropar	735
5.	Sangrur	476
6.	Amritsar	779
7.	Bhatinda	146
8.	Faridkot	254
9.	Ferozepur	851
10.	Gurdaspur	1299
11.	Hoshiarpur .	1198
12.	Jalandhar	837
13.	Kapurthala	516
14.	Mansa	155
	Total	9071

Statement II

District-wise number of Villages in (he state having Post Offices (Category-wise) in Punjab Circle (DSOs, EDSOs & EDBOs)

S. No.	Name of District	DSO post office	EDS *	EDB **	EDB ***
i.	Ludhiana	337	63	__	274
2.	Fatehgarh Sahib	65	10	—	55
3.	Patiala	189	6	—	183
4.	Ropar	161	19	2	140
5.	Sangrur	234	10	—	224
6.	Amritsar	424	42	3	379
7.	Bhatinda	137	7	—	130
8.	Faridkot	319	25	—	294
9.	Ferozepur	272	17	1	254
10.	Gurdaspur	245	24	1	220
11.	Hoshiarpur	393	48	—	345
12.	Jalandhar	403	47	1	355
13.	Mansa	86	6	—	80
14.	Kapurthala	117	19	—	98
	Total-	3382	343	8	3031

* Departmental Sub Post Offices.
** Extra Departmental Sub Post Offices.
*** Extra Departmental Branch Post Offices.